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PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

IRELAND

BY

KATHARINE TYNAN

AUTHOR OF "THE DEAR IRISH GIRL," "AN ISLE IN THE WATER," ETC.

WITH EIGHT FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR

BY

A. HEATON COOPER

TRANSFERRED TO
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SECOND EDITION

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SKETCH-MAP OF IRELAND.

IRELAND

CHAPTER I

ARRIVAL

It may safely be said that any boy or girl who takes a peep at Ireland will want another peep. Between London and Ireland, so far as atmosphere and the feeling of things is concerned, there is a world of distance. Of course, it is the difference between two races, for the Irish are mainly Celtic, and the Celtic way of thinking and speaking and feeling is as different as possible from the Saxon or the Teuton, and the Celt has influenced the Anglo-Irish till they are as far away from the English nearly as the Celts themselves. If you are at all alert, you will begin to find the difference as soon as you step off the London, Midland and Scottish train at Holyhead and go on board the steamer for Kingstown. The Irish steward and stewardess will have a very different way from the formal English way. They will be expansive. They will use ten

words to one of the English official. Their speech will be picturesque; and if you are gifted with a sense of humour—and if you are not, you had better try to beg, borrow or steal it before you go to Ireland—there will be much to delight you. I once heard an Irish steward on a long-sea boat at London Docks remonstrate with the passengers in this manner:

"Gentlemen, gentlemen, will yez never get to bed? Yez know as well as I do that every light on the boat is out at twelve o'clock. It's now a quarter to wan, and out goes the lights in ten minutes."

There is what the Englishman calls an Irish bull in this speech; but the Irish bull usually means that something is left to the imagination. I will leave you to discover for yourself the hiatus which would have made the steward's remark a sober English statement.

These things make an Irish heart bound up as exultantly as the lark springs to the sky of a day of April—that is to say, of an Irish exile home-returning—for the dweller in Ireland grows used to such pearls of speech.

Said a stewardess to whom I made a request that she would bring to my cabin a pet-dog who, under the charge of the cook, was making the night ring

with his lamentations : " Do you want to have me murdered ?" This only conveyed that it was against the regulations. But while she looked at me her eye softened. " I'll do it for *you*," she said, with a subtle suggestion that she wouldn't do it for anyone else ; and then added insinuatingly, " if the cook was to mind the basket ?" " To be sure," said I, being Irish. " Ask the cook if he will kindly mind the basket and let me have the dog." And so it was done, and the cook had his perquisite, while I had the dog.

At first, unless you have a very large sense of humour—and many English people have, though the Irish who do not know anything about them deny it to them *en bloc*—you will be somewhat bewildered. Apropos of the same little dog, we asked a policeman at the North Wall, one wintry morning of arrival, if the muzzling order was in force in Dublin.

" Well, it is and it isn't," he said. " Lasteways, there's a muzzlin' order on the south side, but there isn't on the north, through Mr. L—— on the North Union Board, that won't let them pass it. If I was you I'd do what I liked with the dog this side of the river, but when I crossed the bridge I'd hide him. You'll be in a cab, won't you ?"

After you've had a few peeps at Ireland, you won't want the jokes explained to you, perhaps, or the picturesqueness of speech demonstrated.

Before you glide up to Kingstown Pier you will have discovered some few things about Ireland beside the picturesqueness of the Irish tongue. You will have seen the lovely coast-line, all the townships glittering in a fairy-like atmosphere, with the mountains of Dublin and Wicklow standing up behind them. You will have passed Howth, that wonderful rock, which seems to take every shade of blue and purple, and silver and gold, and pheasant-brown and rose. You will have felt the Irish air in your face; and the Irish air is soft as a caress. Later, when you have reached Westland Row and driven across Dublin you will have noticed that the poor people walking along the streets are far more ragged and unkempt generally than the same class in England. The women have a way of wearing shawls over their heads which does not belong naturally to the Western world, and sets one to thinking of the curious belief some people have entertained about the Irish being descended from the lost tribes. A small girl in a Dublin street will hold her little shawl across her mouth, revealing no more of the face than the eyes and nose, with an effect which is distinctly

Eastern. The quay-side streets are squalid enough, and the people ragged beyond your experience, but there will be no effect of depression and despondency such as assails you in the East End of London. The people are much noisier. They greet each other with a shrillness that reminds you of the French. The streets are cheerful, no matter how poor they may be. I have always said that there is ten times the noise in an Irish street, apart from mere traffic, than in an English one. An Irish village is full of noise, chatter of women, crying of children, barking of dogs, lowing of cattle, bleating of sheep, crowing of cocks, cackling of hens, quacking of ducks, grunting of pigs. The people talk at the top of their voices, so that you might suppose them to be quarrelling. It is merely the dramatic sense. I have heard an Irish peasant make a bald statement —or, at least, it would have been bald in an English mouth—as though she pleaded, argued, remonstrated, scolded, deprecated.

Accustomed to Irish ways, English villages have always appeared very dead to me. Unless it be on market morning, one might be in the Village of the Palace of the Sleeping Beauty. I once visited Dunmow of the Flitch of a golden May-day. It was neither Flitch Day nor Market Day, and I aver that

I walked through the town and saw no living creature, except a cat fast asleep, right in the midst of the sun-baked roadway. Such a thing could not have happened in Ireland.

CHAPTER II

DUBLIN

Dublin is a city of magnificences and squalors. It has the widest street in Europe, they say, in Sackville Street, which, after the manner of the policeman and the muzzling order; half the population calls O'Connell Street. The public buildings were very magnificent. These were due, for the greater part, to the man who found Dublin brick and left it marble—that great city-builder, John Claudius Beresford, of the latter half of the eighteenth century, whose name is at once famous and infamous to the Irish ear, because when he had made a new Dublin he flogged rebels in Beresford's Riding-School in Marlborough Street with a thoroughness which left nothing to be desired except a little mercy. Beresford, who was one of the Waterford Beresfords, was First Commissioner of Revenue, as well as an Alderman of

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THE VILLAGE OF ROUNDSTONE, CO. GALWAY

the City of Dublin. Before he went city-building, Dublin was a small place enough. For centuries it consisted chiefly of Dublin Castle, the two cathedrals—Patrick's and Christ's Church; Dublin is alone in Northern Europe in possessing two cathedrals—and the narrow streets that clustered about them. Somewhere about the middle of the eighteenth century St. Stephen's Green was built—the finest square in Europe, we say; I do not know if the claim be well founded. A little later Sackville Street began to take shape, communicating with the other bank of the river by ferry-boats. Essex Bridge was at that time the most easterly of the bridges, and the banks of the river were merely mud-flats, especially so where James Gandon's masterpiece, the Custom-House, was presently to rear its stately façade. The latter part of the eighteenth century was the great age of Dublin. Ireland still had its Lords and Commons, who had declared their legislative independence of England in 1782. Society was as brilliant as London, and far gayer. It was certainly a time in which to go city-building, for these splendours needed housing. Before Beresford began his plans, calling in the genius of James Gandon, with many lesser lights, to assist him, Sackville Street and Dublin generally were as insanitary as any town of

the Middle Ages. Open sewers ran down the middle of the streets. There was no pretence at paving. The streets were ill-lit by smelly oil-lamps. The Dublin watchmen found plenty to do, as did their brethren in London, in protecting peaceful citizens from the pranks of the Dublin brethren of the London Mohocks in the tortuous and ill-lit streets. Unhappily much of the beauty created by Gandon and the other artists who flocked to Dublin in that hour of her Renaissance was destroyed during the Irish Rebellion of 1916 and the unhappy years that came after. Fortunately the Custom-House was not ruined beyond reconstruction, but other fine buildings were, and Sackville Street still shows dreadful gaps from the various bombardments of the city. But these doubtless in time will be renewed, because Ireland is now, generally speaking, in a state of reconstruction.

The ancient Lords and Commons of Ireland lived about the Rotunda in Sackville Street, Rutland Square, Gardiner's Row, Great Denmark Street, Marlborough Street, and North Great George's Street, when John Claudius Beresford began his work. He bridged the river with Carlisle—now O'Connell—Bridge. He constructed Westmoreland Street right down to the Houses of Parliament.

He built the Custom-House, used under the English rule as Government offices, on a scale proportioned to the needs of the greatest trading city in Europe, oblivious of the fact that Irish trade was going or gone. Alas! that great beauty of Dublin was badly shattered in the recent troubles, but not beyond reparation. Some day it will rise again, and time will do the rest. Meanwhile the nobility and gentry who had town-houses were seized with the passion for beautifying them. The old Dublin houses were of an extraordinary stateliness and beauty. Money was poured out like water on their beautification. The floral decoration in stucco-work on walls and ceilings still makes a dusty glory in some of the old houses. Famous artists, like Cipriani and Angelica Kauffmann, painted the wall-panels and ceilings with pseudo-classical goddesses and nymphs. A certain Italian named Bossi executed that inlaying in coloured marbles which made so many of the old mantelpieces things of beauty. The old Dublin houses still retain their stately proportions, although some of them have been destroyed and others come down to be tenement-houses. But there is yet plenty to remind us that Dublin had once its Augustan Age.

If you have the tastes of the antiquary, the old

Dublin houses and buildings will afford you matter of great interest.

In the first place, there is Dublin Castle, which was built by King John. Of the four original towers, only one now remains. The castle was formerly the town residence of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, since Sidney established himself there in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Under the new rule, it is a congerie of Government offices of one sort or another.

The castle was built over the Poddle River, which now creeps in darkness, degraded to a common sewer, under the dark and dismal houses, and empties itself in an unclean cascade through a grating in the Quay walls, whence it flows away with the Liffey to the sea. St. Patrick's Hall, where the famous beauties danced at Vice-Regal balls, is now the Law Courts of the new Government and its officers. I lived many years in Dublin without desiring to inspect what might be seen of Dublin Castle, though I have often stood in the castle yard under the Bermingham Tower, and, looking up at that great keep, have remembered how Hugh O'Donnell and his companions escaped by way of the Poddle one Christmas Eve in the spacious days of great Elizabeth, and how the young chieftain of Tyr-

connel narrowly escaped the frozen death which befell his companions as they climbed those Dublin mountains over yonder to find refuge with the O'Tooles and O'Byrnes of the Wicklow Hills.

Those were the Irish clans that used to make the English burghers of Dublin shake in their shoes. While they sold their silks or woollens, or sat at meals or exchange, or said their prayers in their churches, they never could be sure that the wild Irish cry would not come ringing at their gates. The O'Byrnes and O'Tooles would swoop down at intervals, and raid the cattle from the fat pastures of the Pale, sweeping back again with their spoil to their impregnable fastnesses. Some years ago a Father O'Toole published a book on the Clan of O'Toole, which contained the genealogical tree of the O'Tooles, tracing their descent without a break from Noah. This is a matter of interest to me, as I myself am an O'Toole.

The history of nations is, after all, the history of men—of men and of movements—and it is individual and outstanding men who make for us the milestones of history. Ireland has produced, in proportion to her population, a more than usual number of outstanding men; and, thinking of Dublin houses and

monuments of one kind or another, we find it is of men we are thinking, after all.

Thinking of Christ Church, that beautiful Gothic cathedral, I think of St. Patrick, because his staff was preserved there, and was an object of great reverence till it was burnt by a too-zealous reforming Bishop in the days of Elizabeth. St. Patrick was a very delightful saint. One loves the legends that gather about him. I like especially how he wrestled with the angel on Croagh-Patrick, and would not come down from the mountain till he had been granted his several prayers. There were three in particular. The first one was that Ireland should never depart from the Christian faith. "Very well, then," said the angel, "God grants you that." "Next," said Patrick, "I ask that on the Judgment Day I may sit on God's right hand and judge the Irish people." "That you can't have," said the angel. "Be quiet now, and go down from the mountain." "What!" said Patrick, "is it for this that I have fasted so many days on the mountain, wrested with evil ones, been exposed to the rain and tempest, prayed hard, fought temptations—only for this?" "Very well, you shall have this," replied the angel. "And now that you have your wish satisfied, go down from the mountain." "Not till my third prayer be granted."

"What! a third prayer?" cried the angel. "You ask too much, O Patrick, and you shall not have it. You are too covetous." "Was it for this?" began Patrick again, with a recital of all he had done and suffered. "Very well, then," said the angel, tired out; "have your third prayer, but ask no more, for it will not be given to you." "I ask that all who recite my prayer" (*i.e.*, the prayer known as St. Patrick's Breastplate) "shall not be lost at the Last Day." "Very well, then," said the angel, "you shall have that; but now go down." "I am content now," said Patrick; "I will go down."

He was a fighting saint, despite his many gentlenesses. At Downpatrick, where he built his cathedral, he took a little fawn which his men would have killed, and carried it in his breast. I like the description of him by his friend St. Evan of Monasterevan, which tells us how he was sweet to his friends, but terrible to his enemies.

I think of St. Patrick at Christ Church rather than of St. Lawrence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, who, with Strongbow, that fierce Norman who seized Ireland for Henry II. of England, built Christ Church. St. Lawrence O'Toole's heart lies here in a reliquary. Here also Lambert Simnel was crowned; but who thinks of that ignoble impostor now?

Christ Church presents an effect of lightness and brightness very different from St. Patrick's, in which it seems to me it is always afternoon, and winter afternoon. St. Patrick's is in a particularly picturesque slum of the city, in the Earl of Meath's liberty, hard by the Coombe, which was once a pleasant dell, no doubt, but is now the raggedest of slums. To the Earl of Meath's liberty came the French silk-weavers expelled from France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and established the industry of poplin-weaving there.

The man with whom St. Patrick's Cathedral is associated is Jonathan Swift, and for his sake it is perpetually dark. It is haunted by the tragedy of his life and death. Here Esther Johnson is buried; and over yonder, in the Deanery House, Swift, a sick man, lay in bed and watched the torches in the great church when they were making ready her grave. The strange bitterness of the terrible inscription which commemorates that most unhappy great man seems to colour the atmosphere of St. Patrick's. "Where fierce indignation can no more lacerate his heart," he rests by the side of the woman who was faithful to him with a long patience, whose death left him to loneliness and madness.

The whole place is haunted by him, as is the

deanery close by and the old library of Dr. Marsh, which is said to have a ghost that flings the books about at night.

What ghosts meet one in the Dublin streets! There is Wesley. He was visiting the Countess of Moira at Moira House, which now, docked of its upper story, is the Mendicity, or, as the Irish put it, the "Mendacity" Institution. It was a splendid mansion when Wesley was there. One room with a bay-window was lined with mother-o'-pearl. "Alas," said Wesley prophetically, "that all this must vanish like a dream!" The Moiras were not only religious: they were cultivated, refined, patriotic in the truest sense—altogether noble and generous. They received poor Pamela, Lady Edward Fitzgerald, with kindly open arms when that romantic hero, Lord Edward, lay dying of his wounds.

You shall see, if you will, the old House of Lords, preserved in its old state by the Governors of the Bank of Ireland, who have made it their board-room. The House of Commons has become the Bank's counting-house, and there is no trace of its former state. What ghosts you might meet there at night! —Grattan, Flood, Curran, Hussey Burgh, Plunket, to say nothing of lesser worthies. Over against the Parliament Houses was Daly's Club-House, where

forgathered the wits, the bucks, the duellists. There was Buck Whaley, who walked to Jerusalem for a wager, and for the same reason once sprang out of the window of his house on Stephen's Green into a carriage full of ladies. That house is now University College, and has its associations with Newman; and you might see there some of the most beautiful specimens of the eighteenth-century decoration still remaining—the Bossi mantelpieces, the stucco-work, the beautiful old doors of wine-red mahogany, and all the rest of it. Buck Whaley had a friend, Buck Jones, who is commemorated in Jones's Road. When I was a little girl—and how long ago that is I shall not tell you—Buck Jones's ghost still walked the road which is named after him. You see, Dublin still ranged itself alongside London; and we had our Buck Whaley and our Buck Jones if London and Bath had their Beau Brummel and their Beau Nash.

Cheek by jowl with the Houses of Parliament is the ancient college of Queen Elizabeth—the College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. That, too, has memories and ghosts. The University has had illustrious sons. Swift, Goldsmith, Bishop Berkeley, Edmund Burke, were among them. Swift was "stopped of his degree for dulness," and had no love

for his *alma mater*. She had other sons, such as Robert Emmet and Theobald Wolfe Tone and Thomas Davis, among her brightest jewels, though she would not have it so. She spreads a quiet place of grey quadrangles and green park and gardens midmost of the city, and she helps to give dignity to Dublin, which in spite of her sadness is always a capital town.

If I were to talk to you of the ancient history of Dublin, this book would become, not "A Peep at Ireland," but "A Peep at Dublin." You will see for yourself the ancient houses of the nobility, the Lords and Commons of Ireland. Some of them have come to strange uses. Aldborough House became a barracks; Powerscourt House was in my day a wholesale draper's; Marino, the splendid residence of the Earls of Charlemont at Clontarf, is in the hands of the Christian Brothers. Many of these old houses were turned into Government offices.

"Alas, that all this must vanish like a dream!" said John Wesley. And how quickly he was justified! In the latter part of the eighteenth century Dublin prided itself on being the gayest capital in Europe. Perhaps Dublin had always too many pretensions. However, it was sufficiently gay and extraordinarily picturesque. The Rutland vice-

royalty marked, perhaps, its highest water-mark of gaiety. It was said that the Rutlands were sent over "to drink the Irish into good-humour"—that is, to distract them from serious matters, such as legislative independence and the like. However that may be, they did set the capital to dancing. It used to be the Anglo-Irish who counted in the rebellious movements. One has to go as far back as Owen Roe O'Neill to find a Celtic leader. For the time, at all events, Dublin gave itself up to the fascinations of the gallant and gay young Duke and his wonderful Duchess. The Irish allowed that the Duchess was one of the handsomest women in Ireland. Elsewhere she was reputed among the loveliest in Europe. We hear of her dancing at a ball attired in light pink silk, with diamond stomacher and sleeve-knots, and wearing a large brown hat profusely adorned with jewels. Every night there were balls at the castle or the Rotunda. The Duchess was dancing Dublin into good-humour. There were all manner of other social festivities. Every Sunday the Duchess drove on the North Circular Road, with six cream-coloured ponies to her phaeton, all the rank and fashion of Dublin following in coaches-and-six, coaches-and-four, and less pretentious equipages. There was card-playing; there

was hard drinking; there were all manner of distractions, disedifying and edifying. The representatives of the King and Queen took the charities under their wing; and dancing at the Rotunda supported the Rotunda Hospital, to say nothing of the tax on the waiting sedan-chairs, which put a few hundred pounds more into the hospital's coffers.

"Alas, that all this must vanish like a dream!" To be sure, many of the most illustrious of the Anglo-Irish, more Irish than the Irish, refused to be either danced or drunk into good-humour. The brilliant viceroyalty lasted not quite four years, and the gay and handsome Duke left Ireland in the saddest way, carried high on men's shoulders.

Afterwards there were other things than dancing. There was the Rebellion of 1798. There was the Legislative Union with Great Britain, which meant for Ireland the absence of her Lords and gentry, and the spending in London of revenues derived from Ireland.

In the early years of the nineteenth century grass grew in the streets of Dublin. Famine and pestilence followed each other in monotonous succession. Emmet's Rebellion broke out in 1804. If you were interested in such things, you would penetrate the

slummy parts of Dublin as far as Thomas Street to see where, in front of St. Catharine's Church, Emmet died, and the house where Lord Edward Fitzgerald was arrested.

Dublin is full of memories, of associations, of ghosts : no city in Europe is richer in such. There is hardly a stone of her streets which is not storied.

CHAPTER III

THE IRISH COUNTRY

Dublin possesses great natural advantages. The sea, the mountains, the green country, are at her gates. You take one of her many trams, and at the terminus you step into solitudes, into " dear secret greenness " of country ; on to expanses of sea-sand, with the waves breaking in little crisped curls of foam at your feet. She is ringed about with mountains. She has a most beautiful coast-line. Turn which way you will on leaving her, you are safe to turn to beauty. Round about her are clustered various beauties. Beyond the Dublin mountains, the Wicklow Mountains, into which they gently pass, invite you. The mountains have the most beautiful

colouring. It is an effect of the mists and clouds. I have seen a mountain red as a rose, and I have seen one black as a black pansy and as velvety. Sometimes they are veiled in silver, with the soft feet of the flying rain upon them; and sometimes, because the sun is shining somewhere, that same rain will be a garment of silver or of the rainbow.

She is the greenest country ever was seen. England may think she wears the green; but as compared with Ireland her green is rust-coloured and dust-coloured. I have gone over from London in May and have found a green in Ireland that absolutely made me wink.

> "Sweet rose whose hue, angry and brave,
> Bids the rash gazer wipe the eye,"

says Herbert; but the green, which is the eye's comforter of all the colours, is, in an Irish May, of so intense a greenness as to have something of the same effect as Herbert's rose. I think of the fat pasture-lands at the gates of Dublin, as well I know them. In May they are drifts of greenness, with the cattle sunken to their knees, while the meadows white with daisies, gold with buttercups, presently to be brown and green with seeding-grasses, have an exceeding cleanness and brightness of aspect. Grass-green, milk-white, pure gold—these are fields

of delight. There used to be luxuriant hedges, too, ten or twelve feet high. What hedges they were in May! with the hawthorn in full bloom—no one calls it may in Ireland—and, later, the woodbine—honeysuckle in Ireland is the white and purple clover—and with the woodbine the sheets of wild roses flung lavishly over every hedge. Since my young days the hedges have been lopped of their luxuriance, but they are still luxuriant by English hedges, where hedgers and ditchers have been at work stripping the poor things to the earth almost, just as they are coming into leaf, leaving the roads pitiless indeed for the summer days.

I think of the lavish Irish hedges and of the strip of grass white with daisies which ran either side of the footpath. There was always a clear stream singing along the ditch. It had come down from the mountains, and was amber-brown in colour, and clear as glass; it ran over pebbles that were pure gold and silver and precious stones, now and again getting dammed around a boulder, making a leap to escape, and coming around the boulder with a swirl and a few specks of foam floating upon it. Ireland of the Streams is one of the old names for Ireland, and it is justified; for not only are there lordly rivers like the Shannon and the Blackwater, to mention but two of

them, but there are innumerable little streams everywhere, undefiled—at least, as I know them—by factories. You can always kneel down of a summer's day by one, fill your two hands full and drink your fill; and that mountain water is better than any wine. You may track it, if you will, up to the mountains, where you will find it welling out, perhaps, through the fronds of a hartstongue fern, the first tiny gush of it; and you will find it widening out and almost hidden by a million flowers and plants that like to stand with their feet in water. Or you will see it, cool and deep, with golden shadows sleeping in it, slipping round little boulders and clattering over stones, in a tremendous hurry to escape from these sweet places to the noisome city, where it will lose itself in the sewer water before it finds its way to the sea.

There is no such order in an Irish as in an English landscape: none of the rich, ordered garden air which in England so delights Americans and colonials. The Irish landscape is always somewhat forlorn, wild and soft, with an impalpable melancholy upon it—this even in the fat pasture-lands of Dublin County. How much more so when the bogs spread their beautiful brown desolation over miles of country, or in the wild places where man asks for

bread and Nature gives him a stone! At its most prosperous the country is always a little wild, a little mournful, a barefooted colleen with cloudy hair and shy eyes sometimes tearful, and no conventional beauty—only something that takes the heart by storm and holds it fast.

Irish skies weep a deal. That accounts, of course, for the great vegetation, the intense greenness. If I did not know the Irish green I should be unable to realize the mantle of grass-green silk which so often the old ballad-makers gave their knights and ladies. Knowing the Irish grass, I see an intenser green than if I did not know it. Where there are not rocks and stones and mountains, where there is cultivation in Ireland, there is leafage and grass of great luxuriousness. Of a wet summer in Ireland you could scarcely walk through the grass; it might meet above a child's head. Contrariwise, the flora of Ireland, as I know it, is much less various and luxuriant than that of England. In a childhood and youth spent in the Irish country—it was round about Dublin—I recall only the simpler and commoner wild-flowers. On a chalk cliff at Dover, when May spread a carpet of flowers, I have seen a greater variety of wild-flowers than I knew in a lifetime in Ireland—most of them unknown to me by name.

Nor do I think the birds are so many as in England, perhaps because so much of Ireland is stripped of its woods; perhaps because Ireland has been slower to protect the birds than England; perhaps, also, because of the scantier population, which leaves the birds to suffer hunger in the winter. There are no nightingales in Ireland, but I do not think we have missed them, having the thrush and the blackbird, which seem to me to sing with a richer sweetness in Ireland than in England; but that may be because the Irish-born person is prone to exaggerate the sweetness he has lost. But the most characteristic note of the Irish summer is the corn-crake's. Somehow the Irish corn-crake has a bigger note and is much more in evidence than his English brother. All the nights of the early summer in Ireland he saws away with his rasping note, till the hay is cut, when he disappears. I suppose one hears him as much in the day-time, but one does not notice him. He is the harsh Irish nightingale. Poor fellow! he is often immolated before the mowing-machine; and you shall see him flying with his long-legged wife and children—or rather scurrying—to the nearest hedgerow, where there is always a plentiful supply of grass to cover him till he can make up his mind to go elsewhere. It is a saying in Ireland that you

never see a corn-crake after the meadows are cut. A learned doctor has assured me that they migrate to Egypt for the good of their voices.

For the rest, in the Irish country there are villages of an incredible poverty. The Irish village mars a landscape, whereas so often an English one enhances its beauty. There are farmhouses and isolated cottages. The farmhouses are seldom even pretty. Irish house architecture is not beautiful, as a rule, except for the few eighteenth-century houses which derive from the English. The Irish farmhouse is generally a two-story building, slated and whitewashed. It is too narrow for its height, although the height may be no great thing. A mean hall-door in the middle, with a mean window to either side, three mean windows above—that is the Irish farmer's idea of house-building. I remember an Irishman of genius objecting to Morland that his cottages were impossible; there was never the like out of Arcadia. As a matter of fact, the cottages were such as are the commonplaces of English villages. But no good Irishman will concede to England a beauty, natural or otherwise, which Ireland does not possess. Ireland, even before the troubles, had many ruins, now unhappily increased—ruined houses; ruined churches and castles; and behind grey

stone walls, unthought of, uncared for, old disused graveyards filled with prairie grass to the height of the crumbling walls.

When the Irish go away they are always lonely for the mountains. No other mountains are so soft-bosomed and so mild. They have wisps of cloud lying along the side of them and the blue peak showing above. I have seen a rainbow, one end of the arch planted in the sea, the other somewhere behind the mountains, " over the hills and far away." Seeing that incomparable sight, I understood why the Irish peasant imagines fairy treasures hidden at the foot of the rainbow. I, too, have been in Arcadia.

CHAPTER IV

THE IRISH PEOPLE

I MUST warn you, before proceeding to write about the Irish people, that I have tried to explain them, according to my capacity, a thousand times to my English friends and neighbours, and have been pulled up short as many times by the reflection that all I have been saying was contradicted by some other aspect of my country-people. For we are an eter-

nally contradictory people, and none of us can prognosticate exactly what we shall feel, what do, under given circumstances; whereas the Englishman is simple. He has no mysteries. Once you know him, you can pretty well tell what he will say, what feel, and do under given circumstances. You have a formula for him: you have no formula for the Irish. The Englishman is simple, the Irish complex. The Anglo-Irish, who stand to most English people for the Irish, have had grafted on to them the complexity of the Irish without their pliability. It makes, perhaps, the most puzzling of all mixtures, and it may be the chief difficulty in a proper estimate of the Irish character.

The Anglo-Irish are no longer in the ascendancy they once were in Dublin. Their young have scattered or went out in the Great War. They were a strong people, dominant, keeping their individuality through centuries of habitation and association with the Celt. They planted the lovely gardens which still exist all over Ireland; they built the fine houses; they brought over from England, to which they never ceased to belong when they were most Irish, the English tradition of beautiful furniture and home comfort, cleanliness and efficiency. After they had driven out the Irish aristocracy by their various

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A COTTAGE IN CO. DONEGAL

plantations, they came themselves to be aristocratic and in time to stand for culture. They loved animals.

The manners of the people still have the old charm and graciousness. I asked the way in Ballyshannon town once. The woman who directed me came out into the street and a little way with me, and when she left me called to me sweetly, "Come back soon to Donegal!" which left a sense of blessing with me all that day. There was a certain curly-haired "Wullie," who drove the long car from Donegal to Killybegs. I can see "Wullie" yet, helping the women on and off the car with their myriad packages, can see the delightful grief with which he parted from us, his shining face of welcome when he met us again a fortnight later. Ireland, despite the troubles, is as gracious as ever. You find it as soon as you touch the Customs at Kingstown Pier, where the Customs officials, unlike other Customs officials, treat you as innocent until you are proved guilty, handling a delicate situation with a gaiety and good nature that makes the ordeal something of a delight. They start you on your peep at Ireland in a high mood of exhilaration and goodwill.

Thinking over my country-people, I say, "They are so-and-so," and then I have a misgiving, and I say, "But, after all, they are not so-and-so."

They are the most generous people in the world. They enjoy to the fullest the delight of giving ; and what a good delight that is ! I pity the ungiving people. You will receive more gifts in Ireland in a twelvemonth than in a lifetime out of it. The first instinct of Irish liking or loving is to give you something. The giving instinct runs through all classes. If you sit down in a cabin and see an old piece of lustre-ware or something else of the sort, do not admire it unless you mean to accept it ; for it will be offered to you, not in the Spanish way which does not expect acceptance, but in the Irish way which does. I have many little bits of china given so, usually the one thing of any consideration or value the donor possessed. I once sought to buy an old china dish, much flawed and cracked by hot ovens, in a Dublin hotel, as much to save it from following its fellows to destruction as for any other reason. The owner would not sell the dish, but he offered it for my acceptance in such a way that I could not refuse. When I used to go home, the cottagers brought a few new-laid eggs or a griddle-cake for my acceptance. I had a friend in an Irish village whose income from an official source was £10 a year. She had a cottage, a few hens, and enough grass for a cow when she could get one. Her gifts came at

Christmas, at Easter, on St. Patrick's Day, and on some special, private feasts of my own—eggs, sweets, flowers, a bit of lace, or a fine embroidered handkerchief, and, in times of illness, a pair of chickens. That is royal giving out of so little ; and I assure you that it blesses the giver as well as the recipient.

On the other hand, the farmers were always close-fisted, and they have not so much to be close-fisted about in these days. In Ireland as it settles down there is a spirit of progress and going ahead which will affect Irish farmers. The troubled years have taken from them the fleeting prosperity of the war years, but prosperity is on its way. Ireland must still be an agricultural country, though manufactures will not be confined to the North in the future.

The Irish are very like the French. If the day should come when they should learn, like the French, to be thrifty and usurious, I hope I shall not be there to see it. Better—a thousand times better—that they should remain royal wastrels to the end.

As yet we need not fear it. Still, if you ask a drink of water at a mountain cabin in the poorest parts of Ireland, you are given milk ; and *do not offer to pay for it*, lest you sink to the lowest place in the estimation of these splendid givers.

The hospitality is truly splendid. There is a

saying in Ireland that they always put an extra bit in the pot for " the man coming over the hill." It is an unheard-of thing that you should call at an Irish house and not be asked if " you've a mouth on you." If your visit be within anything like measurable distance of meal-time you will be obliged to stay for the meal.

In England, when people are poor, or comparatively so, or feel the need of retrenchment, they " do not entertain." It is almost the first form of retrenchment which suggests itself to the Englishman ; whereas to curtail his hospitalities would be the last form of retrenchment to an Irishman, and you will be entertained generously and lavishly by people you know to be poor. The Englishman's different way of looking at the matter is no doubt partly due to the fact that he is a much more domestic person than the Irishman, and depends mainly on his family life for his happiness and pleasure. Now, the French do not give hospitality at all outside the large family circle, so that in that regard at least the Irish will have a long way to travel before they touch with the French.

I have said that the Irish are not domestic. They are gregarious, but not domestic. The Irishman depends a deal on the neighbours ; he has no such

way of enclosing himself within a little fortified place of home against all the ills of the world as has the Englishman. Irish mothers, like Irish nurses, are often tenderly, exquisitely soft and warm; but the young ones will fly out of the nest for all that. Perhaps the art of making the home pleasant is not an Irish art. Perhaps it is the gregariousness, general and not particular—at least, general in the sense of embracing the parish and not the family. To the young Irish and a good many of their elders the home is dull. They go off to America, leaving the old people to loneliness, because there is no amusement. They do not make their own interests, as the slower, less vivacious nations do. The rainy Irish climate seems made for a people who would find their pleasures indoors. But the Irish will be out and about, telling good stories and hearing them. They are an artistic people, with great traditions; yet books or music or conversation will not keep them at home. If they cannot have the neighbours in, they will go out to the neighbours.

They are very religious, and accept the invisible world with a thoroughness and simplicity of belief which they would say themselves is their most precious inheritance. The Celt is no materialist. He does not love success or riches; most of those whom

he holds in esteem have been neither successful nor rich. Money is not the passport to his affections. He ought never to go away, and, alas! he goes away in thousands! Contact with the selfish, money-getting materialism has power to destroy the spiritual qualities of the Celt, once he is outside Ireland. When he comes back—a prosperous Irish-American—he is no longer the Celt we loved. And he does come back: that is one of his contradictions. The home he has left behind because of its dullness, the arid patch of mountain-land, the graves of his people, call him back again at the moment when one would have said every bond with them was loosened.

He is full of sentiment, yet he made mercenary marriages. Irish match-making may be a thing of the past. In the South and West of Ireland the prospective bride was bargained over with no more sentiment than if she were a heifer. She might be "turned down" for an iron pot or a feather-bed which her mother would not give up to supplement the dowry. Satin cheeks and speedwell eyes and a head of silk like the raven's plume did not count against a bullock extra with a yellow spinster of greater fortune, or was not supposed to count; for sometimes Cupid stepped in, although the match-making customs were usually accepted as unquestioningly as

a similar institution is by the French. And even in such unpromising soil flowers of love and tenderness will spring up. I have still somewhere a letter from an Irish peasant which I think affords a beautiful refutation of the idea that sentiment and match-making cannot go together. Here is a passage from it:

"For the last few weeks I was anxiously engaged at match-making, as matters were going from bad to worse; having no housekeeper, household jobs and cares prevented me from attending to outside work. Well, at last my match is made. The marriage is to take place next Thursday. The 'young girl' is twenty-two years, and I thank God that I am perfectly satisfied with my life-companion-to-be. There were many other matches introduced to me—far more satisfactory from the financial point of view, some having £20, some £30, and one £40 more fortune than my intended wife has, with whom I am getting but £90, while I must 'by will' give £120 to my brother, leaving a deficit of £30; but, somehow, I could not satisfy my mind with the other 'good girls' if they had over £200—nay, at all. And the poet's words were true when he said something like 'pity is akin to love'; pity I felt first for my intended wife, with her simple, yet wise, unaffected ways, not used to world's ways and wiles,

'an unspoiled child of Nature,' never flirted, never went to dances, with the bloom of her maidenhood fresh and pure, and fair and bright. When but a last £5 was between myself and her people *re* fortune, her very words to me were : 'Wisha, God help me ! if I'm worth anything, I ought to be worth that £5.' That expression of hers stung me to the quick, so openly, frankly, and innocently uttered, and 'I'm getting other accounts, but would not marry anyone but you.' Well, the end was in that one night, sitting beside her in her father's house, the feeling of pity changed to a warmer feeling, thank God ; for if it didn't, I would rather live and die single than marry against my will. ''Tisn't riches makes happiness.' I've read somewhere that when want comes in at the door, love flies out of the window ; but I don't believe it—I don't believe it. And my brother is kind ; he will be giving me time to pay the balance, £30, by degrees."

The Irish are notoriously brave, yet they have a fear of public opinion unknown to an Englishman. Underneath their charmingly gay and open manner there is a self-consciousness, a self-mistrust. For all their keen sense of humour, they cannot bear laughter directed at themselves. They dread to be made absurd more than anything else in this world.

THE UPPER LAKE, KILLARNEY, CO. KERRY

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They are responsive and sympathetic, yet too witty not to be sometimes malicious; and they are warm and generous, yet not always so reliably kind as a duller, slower people. They are irritable, so they are less tolerant of children and animals, although they make excellent nurses, as I have said. They have no tolerance at all for slowness and stupidity, very little for ugliness or want of charm. They adore beauty, though it doesn't count for much in their most intimate relations; and Ireland is not, therefore, the paradise of plain women.

I have not touched on a hundredth part of their contradictoriness, which makes the Irish so eternally unexpected and interesting. They can be, as they say themselves, "contrairy" when they choose—and they often choose. Yet, when all is said and done, they are the pleasantest people in the world. Nor is their pleasantness insincere. They are pleasant because they feel pleasant; and an Irish man or woman will pay you an amazing, fresh, audacious compliment which an Englishman might feel, but would rather die than say.

Did I say that the Celt was gay and melancholy? He is exquisitely gay and most profoundly melancholy. He is in touch with the other world, and yet desperately afraid of it, or of the passage to it,

being a creature of fine nerves and apprehension; whence he will joke about death to cover up his real repugnance, and yet hold the key to heaven as securely as though it were the other side of the wall, with a lonesome passage to be traversed. It is the lonesomeness of death which makes it terrible to the gregarious Irishman, although he knows that the other side of the wall the kinsmen and friends and neighbours await him, friendly and loving as of old.

CHAPTER V

IRELAND CHANGING AND UNCHANGING

The beauty of Ireland is very largely around her coast-line. Go southward to Wicklow and Wexford, with great headlands and mountains range upon range running down to the sea. It is nobly and tenderly beautiful—deep gorges, magnificent towering peaks high in the pellucid sky, lovely vales, singing streams, golden and amber, that make a quiet music as they run to swell the wide-spreading and isleted rivers below.

Waterford is a storied town. Here came the Normans under Strongbow, making their first landing in Ireland at the town on the banks of the River Suir. The same river runs by many a ruined

castle and abbey wall, for the Normans were great builders. Waterford has many Norman remains; so has Kilkenny and the surrounding country. The coast-line of Clare is superb, and so on all round the country; there is hardly a dull bit of coast around Ireland. You must visit Kerry for Killarney and the Kenmare River, Glengariff and Parknasilla, and all the other heavenly places. Limerick has its lace, and its girls of the lovely complexions, and its Siege and its Treaty. Then there is Connemara and wild Mayo, with Achill Island and Croagh Patrick, and Sligo and the Rosses.

There was an old man who came back to Ireland, only to find that his friends had all departed for the Land of the Young.

"Shure they're all gone," said he, "but there are always the mountains." Many of us would go back to Ireland for the sake of the mountains.

The years since this book was first written have brought many changes. The Grear War has played its part. There were the troubles that followed after; these have left few traces behind. Ireland is Ireland still. The gracious are unchanged.

One returns to Ireland with the old uplift of the heart. The gentle air meets you like a rose. The people are soft and smiling as of old.

There is a new Government in Ireland, and Ireland is at peace. The new Government is young and full of energy. Ireland under English rule was anything but efficient. The inefficiency was part of the charm. Ireland is learning to be efficient without losing her charm. She has so much to offer.

There are the two Chambers of the Parliament sitting in Dublin. It is not difficult for visitors to get admission to their debates. If he or she knows anything of the old style of debating in Ireland, he or she will be amazed at the almost ostentatious absence of oratorical flourish.

We talked a lot in the old Ireland and let the predominant partner do the work or not do it as seemed best to her. Now we are out to do the work for ourselves and to do the best we can for ourselves. There are arrears to make up and some bad things to clear away, but it is a-doing. Rivers to be forded, mountains to be crossed, hatreds and evil memories to be washed out and forgotten. It is in the doing. One class has gone from Ireland, but it has gone from England, too—*i.e.*, the young men of the upper middle and, indeed, the upper classes, the professional classes. Such as they have a deal to do with the building of a nation and a nation's history.

Whatever Ireland has lost, she has kept her gaieties,

her amusements. It would be a poor day in Ireland when there would not be a race-meeting to attend. If you accused the Irish of frivolity, therefore, they would remind you that horse-breeding was an Irish industry, so making a virtue of their sport. For the motorist it may be said that the Irish roads are almost perfect. The new Government has spent a deal of money on them. There are always several theatres running, plenty of dances, and Irish hospitality is still what it was. In the country house where I am a guest at this moment we sit twelve to meals, sometimes more than that. There is a most abounding hospitality; no wonder those who were in the quiet years before the war sigh after Ireland as a land of milk and honey.

There are excellent hotels in Dublin and the other towns of importance. The good country inns as we used to know them in England are still to seek. Irish country hotels used to make up by humour for what they lacked in efficiency. Many of the good stories in the old Ireland used to turn upon the quaintnesses of the country hotel. But I am bound to say I have never heard of, or met with, one like that described in the pages of some recent Irish humorists.

I will tell you something about the new Irish that

will prove to you, if you need proof, that the new Irish are just the old Irish.

The Irish Customs officials are, in my experience, the most engaging of their kind. They have become experienced since the winter of 1923, when I first met them, a row of tall, shy boys, who were very apologetic over the business of handling the luggage.

"Ah, sure, whichever one gives you the least trouble," one said, when asked what he desired to be opened.

They are experienced now, but—one looks down amiably at a neatly packed tray of a trunk, the contents rolled in tissue paper.

"It seems a pity to disturb them, she has them so tidy."

Then he picks up the chapter of a story in MS. thrown in at the last moment.

"People do be sometimes makin' a list of what they've got in their trunks," he says slyly; but he has seen a name. "It would be a pity now to give her a bad impression of us, and she comin' home."

One remembers the *douaniers* of various places and wonders at how easily a disagreeable office may be turned to something warm and affectionate.

The voices are all intimate in Ireland. Dublin

might well be one large family to hear the confidential, the coaxing voices in the streets. At a certain point where sentries were stationed I saw two very young and good-looking ones chasing each other round a sentry-box in an hour of ease. The Irish are natural soldiers: it is difficult to make them machines.

I went into a village shop in a sleepy village buried deep in greenery the other day and made a purchase. Having paid for it we fell into talk. Somewhere in the middle of the conversation I made a second purchase, and departed in a glow of goodwill, forgetting to pay for it! My companion, being English, remembered, and I went back.

"Did you know that I hadn't paid?" I asked the good woman.

"I knew you forgot," she said.

"Why didn't you call after me?"

"Ah, sure, I wouldn't be following anyone."

It makes life very pleasant. After five months stay, merely as a visitor in a country home, I have left with the most warm leave-takings from people with whom I had done business, in the post-office, the village shop. If I go back they will receive me with open arms, as an old friend.

CHAPTER VI

THE NORTH

Between Dublin and Newry there is not much to see or to remember except, that Cromwell sacked Drogheda with a thoroughness, and that at Dundalk Edward Bruce, the brother of Robert, was crowned King of Ireland. The Mourne Mountains and Carlingford Lough bring us back to characteristic Ireland. Beyond them one enters the manufacturing districts—that north-east corner of Ireland which no Celt looks upon as Ireland at all. In speech, in character, in looks, the people become Scotch and not Irish. One has crossed the border and Celtic Ireland is left behind.

In the north-east corner of Ulster they are all busy money-making and money-getting. The North of Ireland has admirable qualities—thrift, energy, industry, ambition, capacity. In other parts of Ireland you find these qualities here and there ; they are mainly, but not altogether, the qualities of the Anglo-Irish—that is, in so far as they are a business asset. The Celt has no real capacity for money-

CARLINGFORD LOUGH

making, though at the wrong end of the virtue of thrift—that dreariest of the virtues—he may accumulate it. He will put an enormous deal of energy into something that does not pay him in hard cash. Honorary positions are greedily sought after by the Irish everywhere. They will run any number of societies for nothing, will do the business of Leagues, of the Poor Law, of the County Councils. The energy shown by the Celt in doing the public business would enrich him if applied to his own. He has a large capacity for public business, and an extraordinary readiness to do it, which is, I suppose, the reason why he does the public business of America, while non-Irish Americans sit by and grumble at his way of doing it.

In Ireland and in America he does hard manual labour, but somehow the genius of finance is not his. His hard work is on the land in one form or another. Now and again he may build up quite a considerable fortune in petty shop-keeping—the big traders are nearly all Anglo-Irish—but when he does, his sons become professional men and the business ceases to be. One can hardly imagine in Celtic Ireland what occurs every day in English business life, where the son of a successful business man may be a public-school man, a University man, and have had all the advan-

tages of wealth, and yet succeed his father in the business. And his son succeeds him, and so on. This, in Celtic Ireland, would, I fear, be taken as indicative of a pettifogging spirit. The Anglo-Irishman, on the contrary, succeeds to the business his father has made, even though he be a University man; and the Grafton Street shops used to be run by men who were graduates and honourmen of the University, and yet did not disdain to be seen in their shops.

There is nothing Irish about North-East Ulster except the country itself, which does not materially alter its character, because it is studded with factories. From the streets of Belfast you see the Cave Hill, as from easy-going Dublin you see the Dublin Mountains. Perhaps there is something of exuberance caught from the Celt in the paraphernalia and ceremonial of the Orange Society. Who can say how much of poetry it may not mean, that crowded hour of glorious life which comes about mid-July, when men who have worked side by side in amity all the rest of the year suddenly become bitter enemies, when the wearing of an Orange sash and the sight of an Orange lily stir a fever in the blood ?

Apart from such occasions, they are given in Belfast to minding their own business, and minding it

very well. The Belfast man is very shrewd, but he has a great simplicity withal. He has none of the uppish notions of the Celt, and though he makes money he does not make it to display it. He is blunt and brusque in his speech and manner, and so not unlike his Lancashire brother. He lives simply. In public matters he has the priceless advantage, in Ireland, of knowing what he wants; and he usually gets it, unless his demands be too outrageous. He is a hard man of business, but in his human relationships he is kind and sincere. I have known exiles of Dublin who went to Belfast in tears, and for the first months or years of their residence were always sighing after Dublin. When, however, they came to know the man of the North—he takes a good deal of knowing—nothing would induce them to return to Dublin.

Like his Scottish progenitors, he stands by the Bible. There is as much Bible-reading in the fine red-brick mansions of Belfast as there is in Scotland. He does not produce literature. The more artistic parts of Ireland look down on him as one to whom "boetry and bainting" are as unacceptable as they were to the Second George. But he encourages solid learning, and he endows seats of learning as generously as does the American millionaire, who in

this respect offers an example to his English brother. The Belfast man has the Scottish love of education. He has many of the homespun Scottish virtues, and much less than the Scottish love of money.

At the very gates of Belfast you find the Irish country. The Glens of Antrim are as Irish as Limerick or Clare. They are very beautiful, and not much exploited. There is also the Giant's Causeway to see. The legend of its construction is that Finn, the Irish giant, invited a Scotch giant over to fight him, and generously provided the Causeway for him to cross by ; but he played a nasty trick on him, for he pretended to the Scottish giant when he came that he was his own little boy. "If you are the little son, what must your father be ?" the Scottish giant is reported to have said before taking to his heels.

I do not believe the story. I believe that the Scottish giant came and stayed. You see his children all over North-East Ulster.

There are women-poets whom one associates with the North—Moira O'Neill of the Glens, and Alice Milligan, a daughter of Belfast. There was also Ethna Carbery, and Joseph Campbell is from Belfast, and A. E. is also a man of the Border.

CHAPTER VII

CORK AND THEREABOUTS

THERE is something of rich and racy association about the very name of Cork—something that suggests joviality, wit, a warm southern temperament. Corkmen only out of all Ireland hold together. The rest of Ireland used to be fissiparous, disunited. Corkmen cleave closer than Scotsmen to one another, and to be a Corkman is to another Corkman a cloak that covers a multitude of sins. A Corkman in Dublin will have friends in all sorts of unlikely places. What matter though a man be in a humble rank of life—a cabman, a policeman, a postman, even a scavenger! So he be a Corkman, he has an appeal to the heart of his brother Corkman. It is a Freemasonry. There is nothing else like it in Ireland, nor anywhere else, so far as I know; for the Scotsman coming into England may draw other Scotsmen to follow him, but in the Scotch sticking together there is less real affection than there is in the case of the Corkman. To be able to exchange memories of the Mardyke, of the River Lee, of Shandon and

Sunday's Well, is to make Corkmen brothers all the world over. Cork looks on itself as the real capital of Ireland, and has always its eye on a day when Dublin will be dispossessed.

It has a most excellent situation on the River Lee, and is surrounded by all manner of natural beauties. There is plenty of business stirring, and there is a good deal of opulence in Cork, where, Corkmen being men of taste, they display it in their houses, their way of living and on the persons of their beautiful women, with the irresistible Cork brogue to crown all their other charms. Cork is nothing if not artistic. She has produced artists of all descriptions —poets, painters, great newspaper men (was not Delane of the *Times* a Corkman ?), musicians, sculptors, orators, preachers. The words roll off the Cork tongue sweet as honey. There is something extraordinarily rich, gay and alluring about Cork and Cork people. They were always audacious. They set up Perkin Warbeck as a Pretender to the English Crown, clad him in silks and velvets, and demanded his acknowledgment at the hands of the Lord Deputy. I do not know that as a city Cork took a great part in any of the many Irish rebellions. It would make a city of diplomatists because of its honeyed tongue. Queen Elizabeth, they say,

was the first one to talk of Blarney, which is a Cork commodity. There was a certain McCarthy, Lord of Blarney, who would not come in and submit to the Queen's forces, though week by week he promised to come and kept the Queen's anger off by cozening words. "It is all Blarney," the Queen came to say of fair words that meant nothing; but that is a derivation I somewhat suspect. I do not know what Cork was doing in the Desmond Rebellion, of the results of which Spenser has left us so harrowing a description. She was perhaps enjoying herself after the fashion of that day. Spenser married a Cork-woman, and has enshrined her in the "Epithalamion," the most beautiful love-poem in the English language. Cork has its links with the Golden Age of England, for Raleigh was at Youghal, and Spenser at Kilcolman close by; and in Raleigh's house at Youghal they show you the oriel in which Spenser sat and read the "Faërie Queene" to his host, the Shepherd of the Ocean. Youghal and all that part of the country round about Cork is steeped in traditions and memories. St. Mary's Collegiate Church at Youghal might be in an English town, and there are malls and promenades in those parts, with high, crumbling houses, which suggest the English civilization of the Middle Ages and not the Irish civiliza-

tion before the Norman Conquest. The Normans were great church-builders, but of their churches, as in the case of the old Abbey of St. Francis at Youghal, there remain now only ruins—a naked gable standing up amid a wilderness of graves, buried in coarse grasses, which, when I was there, had a greater decency towards the dead than had the living. For it is strange that the Irish, who love the dead, have little piety towards their graves.

From Youghal Sir Walter Raleigh sailed away to Virginia on his last disastrous voyage. Spenser had gone back to London earlier than that, heart-broken by the loss of his little son, who was burnt to death in a fire at Kilcolman Castle. Raleigh and Spenser had received grants of the lands of the attainted Desmonds. Very little profit either had of them, and Raleigh's lands passed to the Earl of Cork, commonly called " the Great," whose flaring chapel destroys the quiet of St. Mary's dim aisles and chancel. Never was there so worldly a monument as this of Robert Boyle, his mother, his two wives, and his nine children, all in hideously painted and decorated Italian marble. The fierce eyes of the great Earl are something to remember with dismay.

I recall the evidence the great Earl adduced to prove that Sir Walter did really hand him over his Irish

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE LIBRARIES

estates on the eve of that journey to Virginia—for a small consideration of money and plenishing for the expedition. "If you do not take the lands, some Scot will have them," said, or is reported to have said, Sir Walter, which reminds us that Jamie had succeeded Elizabeth, and was already transplanting his Scots—Jamie, who was to keep so brilliant a bird as Sir Walter in so squalid a cage as a prison till he made up his mind to send him to the block. Youghal is haunted by Sir Walter and Spenser. My memories of the place in a windy autumn are brightened by sudden gleams, as of splendid attire and golden olive faces with the Elizabethan ruff and the Elizabethan pointed beard.

The Blackwater, which runs through Youghal, dropping into the sea at that point, had at Rhincrew Point its House of Knights Templars. From Youghal they also sailed away in search of El Dorado, but a heavenly one. May they have found it!

And also there is Templemichael, of the Earls of Desmond, the southern branch of the Fitzgeralds, which Cromwell battered down for "dire insolence." There is a story of a Desmond lord who was buried across the water at Ardmore, the holy place of St. Declan, where there is a pilgrimage and a patronage to this day. But holy as Ardmore was and is, Earl

Gerald could not sleep there. He wanted to be back at Templemichael, where his young wife lay in her lonely grave. So that night after night there came a terrible cry, "Garault Arointha! Garault Arointha!"—that is to say: "Give Gerald a ferry!" So at last some of his faithful followers rowed over by night, took up the body of Earl Gerald, and carried it back to Templemichael and to the dead Countess's side. And after that Earl Gerald slept in peace.

My memory of Youghal in that far-away windy autumn is compounded of three or four things. There was purple wistaria hanging in great masses over the walls of the college which was the foundation of one of the Desmonds. There was provision there for so many singing men—twenty, was it?—who were to sing in St. Mary's choir. The great Earl of Cork had a great maw, one that never suffered from indigestion. The revenues of St. Mary's College went the same way as Sir Walter's slice of the Desmond lands. Then, again, in a little shop-window of the town, there was a glorious show of fruit — great scarlet-skinned tomatoes, gorgeous plums and pears and apples, which reminded one that Raleigh had planted orchards at Affane, on the Blackwater. As a rule, fruit is sadly to seek in a small Irish town, although Cork produces some of

the finest fruit I have ever seen. Then, again, there was a room in Raleigh's house, Myrtle Grove, unlit save for the flicker of firelight, the darkness all about us, and an old voice bidding us to notice the earthy smell, which was supposed to enter the room from a subterranean passage that led to St. Mary's.

Again, I have another widely different memory. It is of a fine, tall, beautifully-complexioned girl standing behind the counter of a draper's shop, her shining red-golden head showing against a background of little plaid shawls and kerchiefs, while she lamented in her wailing southern brogue the fact that no one could hope to get married in Youghal, unless one had £300 to buy an old "widda-man"; and they were all the men that were going.

I like to get back from Youghal and its ghosts, and Rosanna, who never thought of rebelling against the marriage customs of her forbears, to cheerful Cork of the living and not the dead, with her tramcars, her jingles—the curious covered car which takes the place of the outside car in other Irish towns — her citizens laughing and button-holing each other with a greater gaiety than the Dubliners; her excellent shops, her beautiful girls promenading Patrick Street, her club-houses, her churches, her Queen's College, and all the rest of it, down to her

river with its busy steamers. Cork's citizens live outside her gates, at Monkstown, at Blackrock, at Glenbrook; and the busy steamers carry them to and fro by the loveliest of waterways. "Are the steamers punctual?" I asked a Cork friend. "Is it punctual?" repeated he. "They're the most punctual things in Ireland, for they always get in before their time."

Since the troubled times the glories of Cork have been sadly eclipsed. Cork, like Dublin, shows the effects of bombardment and fire, but in Cork, as in Dublin, there are elements of reconstruction.

Cork has the most enervating climate for one who comes to it from more northern latitudes. It is always soft and warm, and often wet. "Good heavens!" said John Mitchel, when he came back from twenty years or so of Australia, gliding in by Spike Island in that same silver mist of rain in which he had gone out, "isn't that shower over yet?" The flowers are wonderful in Cork, as well as the fruit. I have seen the suburban gardens of Corkmen a luxuriance of vivid, closely packed, overflowing blossom. Myrtles and fuchsias grow in the open air. There are hedges of fuchsias at Killarney. There are hydrangeas also; but the same is true of Dublin and its precincts. No one coming in from outside has energy to do any-

CORK HARBOUR

thing in Cork. But the Corkman lacks nothing of energy, nothing of the joy of life. He is a keen business man, and there is plenty of industrial enterprise. He is interested in the affairs of the world at large and of Cork in particular. He has his enthusiasms. He is a tremendous politician, and does not mind being on the losing side so long as it is the right one. He is a sportsman and a bit of a gambler; he makes love and is a good friend. The place is full of wit and gaiety and humour. His standard of living when he has money, or ought to have it, is an unusually high one for Ireland. Some of those successful merchants live, I am told, like merchant princes. He is lavish and generous, and fond of display—altogether a rich, abundant, highly-coloured character. He lives in an atmosphere of incessant wit and humour. Hardly a man in Cork but has his nickname. "There goes Billy Boulevard," you hear, and you are told that the gentleman so designated desired to embellish Patrick Street with trees. But it was in Dublin that they called one who had made his money in pneumatic tyres, and was exalted above his humbler neighbours, "Lord Tyre and Side-on."

CHAPTER VIII

GALWAY

Galway is so synonymous with racy Irish life that a peep at Ireland must be incomplete unless it includes a peep at Galway. It is full of the strangest monuments of the past. It was once a town of the Irishry, in the O'Flaherty country. But with the Norman Conquest there came in that group of Anglo-Norman families known as the Tribes, who in course of time went the way of all their compeers, becoming more Irish than the Irish. "Lord!" said Edmund Spenser, "how quickly doth that country alter men's natures!" The Tribes were, and are—for happily there are still the Tribes of Galway—thirteen, viz.: Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Browne, D'Arcy, Font, French, Joyce, Kirwan, Lynch, Martin, Morris, and Skerrett. These Tribes became responsible in time for so much of the wild and picturesque life of the Irish gentry of the eighteenth century—the duelling, the drinking, the racing, the gambling, the general devil-may-care life—that Galway looms more largely, perhaps, than any town in the social history of Ireland.

Galway drew up a code for duellists known as the Galway Code; and in the irresponsible life of the eighteenth century, such as you find in Miss Edgeworth's "Castle Rackrent" and in Lever's novels, the life which the Encumbered Estates Act put a period to, the names of the Tribes figure oftener than more Celtic names. For the picturesque wildness of Irish life was the wildness of the settlers rather than the wildness of the native Irish.

However, in the great days of Galway's trade with Spain and other continental ports, traces of which are scattered all over the old ruined city, which is as much Spanish as it is Irish, the Tribes were just merchant princes, not anticipating the time when, *more Hibernico*, they should fling trade to the winds and become the maddest crew of dare-devils known in the social life of any country. And here I find, in the record of the duelling and drinking days, traces and indications of the English descent of the roysterers. For certainly there was a lack of humour in the actors, though none for the spectator; there was a solemnity—not always a drunken solemnity—in the way their pranks were performed that was not Celtic; for the Celt has a terrible sense of the ridiculous. Doubtless it was from his Anglo-Irish betters that the Celt derived the habit of "trailing his coat"

through a fair when he was spoiling for a fight, though, to do him justice, he practised it only when he was drunk. The Anglo-Irish duellists inaugurated the custom. When on no pretext could they find a friend or neighbour to kill or be killed by, they went out and " trailed the coat," like the gentleman who rode on a tailless horse, with his face to the crupper, and, seeing an unwary stranger smile, immediately challenged him, and rode home in huge delight to look to his pistols. They were extremely solemn over their pranks. One wonders how often the Celtic servants had a smile behind their hands at such strange goings-on of their masters, which would not have been possible to the self-conscious Celt.

Over one of the gates of Galway was the pious legend, " From the ferocious O'Flaherties, good Lord deliver us !" I have heard of other inscriptions referring to other Irish septs over the remaining gates of the town, but those I think are apocryphal. The fact remains that the Tribes, having seized the town of the Irish after their rapacious Norman manner, were obliged to wall it against the O'Flaherties, and doubtless often slept ill at night because of the wild Irish battering at their gates, as did their brothers of the English Pale up in Dublin.

Galway would at that time have been well worth sacking. A traveller of the early seventeenth century reports: "The merchants of Galway are rich and great adventurers at sea: their commonalitie is composed of the descendants of the ancient English families of the towne: and rairlie admit of any new English among them, and never of any of the Irish; they keep good hospitalitie and are kind to strangers, and in their manner of entertainment and in fashioninge and apparellynge themselves and their wives do most preserve the ancient manners and state of annie towne that ever I saw."

They had their enactments against the Irish, even the Norman MacWilliam Burkes, who had gone over to the Irish, bag and baggage:

"That none of the towne buy cattle out of the country but only of true men.

"That no man of the towne shall sell galley, bote or barque to an Irishman.

"That no person shall give or sell to the Irish any munition as hand-povins, calivres, poulter, leade, nor salt-peter, nor yet large bowes, cross-bowes, cross-bowe strings, nor yearne to make the same, nor any kind of weapon on payn to forfayt the same and an hundred shyllinges.

"If anie man being an Irishman to brag and boste upon the towne, to forfayt 12 pence.

"That no man of this towne shall ostle or receive into their house at Christmasse or Easter nor no feast elles, anny of the Burkes MacWilliams, the Kellies, nor no septs elles, without the licence of the Maior and Council on payn to forfayt £5. That neither O' ne Mac shall strutt or swagger through the streets of Galway."

You still find traces of the commerce of the Tribes with Spain, not only in the old Spanish buildings of the town, but in the black Spanish eyes and hair of the people. I remember to have been struck in Donegal by a dignity, a loftiness of bearing, as well as by a height and stateliness of the peasant people that made one murmur "Spanish" to one's own ear.

One of the sights of Galway is the ruins of the house from the window of which James Lynch Fitz-Stephen, a Chief Magistrate of Galway in 1493, hanged his only son for murder with his own hand, lest the townspeople should rescue him. The house is called The Cross Bones nowadays, and is situated most appropriately in Dead-Man's Lane. There remains but an old wall, with a couple of doorways having the pointed Spanish arches and some ornate

window-spaces above. There is a tablet on the wall, bearing a skull and cross-bones, with the inscription :

"Remember Deathe,
Vaniti of vaniti[s], all is but vaniti."

Some people believe that this Lynch is the "onlie begetter" of Lynch Law. This, however, I do not believe, and I think it more likely to have been derived from a Lynch of the mining-camps in Southern California, who was the first to promulgate and put in practice the wild justice of execution without judge or jury. Anyhow, I cannot see that the example of James Lynch FitzStephen was an admirable one, and I do not believe the legend that he died heart-broken as a result of his own stern sense of justice.

The palmy days of the Tribes were over with the Reformation, for they did not cease to be Catholics, and so were in no great favour with the predominant partner. Galway also stood for the King against the Parliament, was besieged and taken by the Parliamentary soldiers under Ludlow, who stabled his horses, according to report, in St. Nicholas's Cathedral. After that Galway's great prosperity as a trading centre passed away, and the Tribes scattered among the ferocious O'Flaherties and others of their sort and became country gentlemen, with a

noble contempt for trade. The situation of Galway, on its magnificent Bay, still cries out for commerce. The spectacle of Galway as a port of call for American steamers has dangled before the eyes of the Galwegians for a long time without being realized, although they made preparations for it long ago, by building a hotel that would house a *Mauretania*-load of travellers.

Some years ago I listened to a Galway Tribesman conversing with someone who had lived in Galway, and who asked after the old places and persons. "What's become of So-and-so?" "He's just the same as ever; not a bit of change in him. He comes home every night strapped to the outside car to keep him from falling off." "And what's become of So-and-so?" "Oh, he's done very well for himself. His father says, 'Mac's all right; he's got the run of a kitchen in Yorkshire,' meaning that he married an English heiress."

This conversation made me feel that to some extent Galway stands where it did.

The Claddagh fishing village by Galway is something not to be missed. It keeps itself to itself, with a reserve Celtic or Spanish or anything else you like, but not English. It used to be ruled by its own King, who was just a fisherman like his subjects,

and was not exalted in his manner of living by his royal state. He was chosen for his governing powers and his mental and moral qualities, and his subjects were ruled by him with a despotism that was never anything but fatherly. They intermarried, too, among themselves—I do not know if this usage survives—and their ring of betrothal, handed on from one generation to another, has a design of two hands holding up a heart. At the Claddagh they still have the Blessing of the Sea, but they will not make a show of it, and even the Galway people are kept in ignorance of the time when the ceremony takes place.

CHAPTER IX

DONEGAL OF THE STRANGERS

It once fell to my lot to make a hasty scamper through Donegal from end to end; that is to say, as far as possible, I made the circuit of the county, beginning with Ballyshannon, following the coast-line, with divergences, from Donegal to Gweedore, going round by Bloody Foreland, by Falcarragh and Dunfanaghy, and ending up by way of Letterkenny at

Ballyshannon again. I took ten or twelve days to do it—perhaps a fortnight—staying each night at an inn. To Gweedore I devoted the best portion of a week. Now, in that scamper I had a very characteristic peep at Ireland. I missed, indeed, the wild gaiety of the South. Donegal people are somewhat sorrowful. But I found plenty of types and racy life nevertheless.

It is a good many years ago now; and travelling in Donegal has been simplified since then by the light railways with which the names of Earl Balfour and Mr. Gerald Balfour are gratefully associated. When I was there I drove through the country, only taking the train from Letterkenny to Ballyshannon on my return journey; and it was an excellent, though somewhat expensive, way of seeing the country. However, the hospitality was so wonderful that one only slept and breakfasted in one's hotel. For the rest, the kind priests were only too eager to give hospitality to myself and Dora Sigerson, my companion.

At Ballyshannon we stayed a night in one of those enormous old hotels with a maze of winding passages, which suggest to one in the dead waste and middle of the night that in case of a fire one never could get out. The next day we came upon the first of the priests, who carried us off to see every-

thing that could be seen of Ballyshannon, including a visit to Abbey Assaroe, which we knew already in William Allingham's poetry. To the grief of these kind friends of ours, we insisted on going off the same afternoon to Donegal town, to which we were driven by "Wullie"—the first "Wullie"—a red-haired, taciturn youth, who suspected us of laughing at him and was closer than an oyster. Your English man or woman is the truly expansive person. When you want to get at anything from an Irishman you've got to sit down and wait for the charmed moment when his suspicion of you is put to sleep. Dr. Douglas Hyde got his Religious Songs and Love Songs of Connacht by sitting over the turf fire in a cabin, taking a "shaugh" of the pipe and offering a fill of it, passing round a flask of poteen, perhaps. It might be hours, and it might be days, and it might be weeks before you broke down the barrier of reserve, well worth the breaking-down if you have "worlds enough and time." You can't travel twenty miles in an English third-class carriage before you have the intimate confidence of your fellow-passengers. You are told which relative died of cancer, with harrowing details, which is in a mad-house, and which in gaol; for the plain English people are the most unreserved in the world, while

the Irish are the most reticent. And if you win a flow of talk from the Irish peasants, be sure they are talking round what they have to tell by way of leading you away from it; for an Irishman uses language to conceal his thoughts.

We hadn't "worlds enough and time" for "Wullie." His lips were tight-locked from Ballyshannon to Donegal.

The next day we saw what was to be seen of the Castle, under the guidance of the parish priest, whom we met walking in the Diamond. We introduced ourselves to him. He was a delightful, humorous, stately, kindly old man, and he looked at us when he met us with an eye that asked: "Who are you and what is your business in Donegal?" It is a way the priests had in the remote parts of Ireland, where they were everything to their flocks. Being reassured, he gave his day to our entertainment, taking us to see some of his parishioners when he had shown us all the town contained of interest.

Killybegs I remember as a beautiful bay, big enough to take in the whole English fleet. The next day we went on to Kilcar, where we found our third priest, who lived in a delightfully clean little cabin with a clay floor. His housekeeper was barefooted, but he had dainty table appointments. I remember

that he had very good china, and he explained that his mother had given it to him. He was the son of rather wealthy people. We had a meal of fish, with a little fruit to follow ; and while we ate it a messenger was out prospecting for the loan of an outside car for the priest. Sure enough, by the time we had finished the meal the car was at the door, and our host carried us off to see the Caves of Muckross, some six miles away. Incidentally, we saw Bunglass, that magnificent cliff-face where Slieve League drops into the sea. I remember a visit we paid to a cottage where a father sat at the loom weaving, the mother was carding wool, and a black-haired daughter was sprigging muslin by the little narrow square window. A scarlet geranium in the window seemed to be in her night-black hair, and her tears flowed when our little priest spoke to her. He told us that her lover had married a richer girl and gone to America. I can remember quite well walking up a mountain road where the friendly little lambs came and trotted a bit of the way with us, and the voice of the young priest as he told us of the innocence of the people—"not a sin in it from year's end to year's end," for they were too poor to drink—and how his ambition was to get away to the East End of London, where there was something to do for a born fighter.

A night at the excellent hotel at Carrick and the next day we were at Glencolumkille, that wild and lonely glen between the mountains and the sea, with the majestic Glen Head standing out into the Atlantic. In the Glen are twelve crosses of stone, where pilgrims make the stations in honour of St. Columba or Columkille, the Dove of the Churches. Above Lough Gartan, on Eithne's Bed, he was born, and any who lie there shall not have the pangs of home-sickness; wherefore many emigrants stretch themselves upon that rocky couch before they cross "the Green Fields to America." The Glen is full of the noise and thunder of the waves, and Slieve League lies superbly up in the sky, reminding one of Browning—

"The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay."

At Glencolumkille we met the fourth of our priests —a tall, thin, Spanish-looking youth, who came to meet us with a collie at his heels. Glencolumkille was very lonesome. There was only an Irish-speaking peasant population of the very poorest, and the nearest one with whom our priest could exchange a word on his own level was some seven Irish miles away. He gave us an impression of immense loneliness, although his joy at having someone to entertain irradiated his melancholy, handsome face with cheer-

fulness. He was rejoiced that by the greatest of good luck he had a bit of meat for dinner, for fish is the staple food of the Glen. He was very much interested in news from the great world, and produced with some pride a copy of the *Daily Telegraph*, several days old, to prove that he kept in touch with the world. He told us that he was the youngest of a large family, and his home was as far away as Dublin. Over nearly a score of years I have the most vivid impression of the lonely figure, the dog at his heels, as we left Glencolumkille behind us. He had made us free of his house and hospitality, and parted from us with the utmost unwillingness.

Ardara, Glenties, Dungloe—I think of them, little villages lying amongst gorgeous mountains, and remember that in those gloomy and frowning fastnesses the Irish were safe against Cromwell's planters, since what man who could choose, not being Irish, would desire to live in such a place? A Donegal farm is something to remember. The one crop the ground grows freely is stones—stones in millions, boulders as great sometimes as a small house. There are glens that are nothing but stones from end to end, about as promising ground as the Giant's Causeway for a farmer. In such places you may see a little field, the size of a tablecloth, snatched

from the aridity of Nature by the incredible industry of man. Everywhere in Donegal man asks Nature for bread and she gives him a stone, unless it be the harvest of the sea, which he snatches from her at the price of his life, it may be.

I saw Donegal in April, softened as much as might be by the wild April showers and the bursts of April sunshine. The clouds and the mountains, the cliffs and the sea—Slieve League, Errigal, Muckish, Bunglass, Horn Head, the Glen Head, Tory Island—were all beautiful beyond telling, with a wild and stormy magnificence of beauty. I try to imagine their desolation in winter and fail to realize it.

Ardara I remember by the beauty of Glengesh on an April day, with a hundred streams running down its sides ; and at Ardara we halted on Sunday, and knelt in the gallery of the church, looking down at the peasants kneeling in rows on the stone floor before the altar. The doors were wide open, and birds wheeled in from the sunlight and out again with flashing wings ; and the air was exquisite, fresh and wild and sweet.

At Gweedore, as I have said, we tarried nearly a week, held there by the hospitality of the parish priest, who would have us see everything thoroughly. We stayed at an idyllic little inn, and were fed on the

MOUNT ERRIGAL, GWEEDORE, CO. DONEGAL

best and simplest fare: stirabout, made as only the Irish can make it; home-made bread; delicious butter, new-laid eggs; little delicate chickens, with green parsley sauce and boiled bacon, potatoes, and cabbage, cooked as only the Irish can cook them; for in certain simple dishes of their own the Irish cannot be beaten.

There was a most picturesque waiting-maid, a shy little girl, as pretty as a picture, who wore a pink cotton frock, and had pink bare feet showing under it, who had the softest, most appealing of voices.

At the inn our priest found us, sallying in with his great blackthorn in his hand to see who were the strange visitors to the Glen. He was a redoubtable priest—the Law of Gweedore, they called him—and he sheltered his people as the hen sheltereth her chickens. The Glen was exquisitely clean from end to end, though starveling poor. But the priest saw to it that they did not starve.

For four or five days, perhaps, we abode in this little inn, where the Glen opens out to the sea. We visited the people in their cottages, under the guidance of our redoubtable *padre*, and saw all there was to be seen. His hospitality was unbounded, although at the time there was a wide and bitter division in politics between us.

I shall not soon forget the manner of our going. We had come now almost to the end of our journey, and it was desirable that we should return to Dublin as quickly as possible. He wanted us to make the journey round by Bloody Foreland, and we wanted to do it as shortly as possible, striking inland to meet the mail-car for Letterkenny at, I think, Gortahork. But we knew better than to say "No" to the Law of Gweedore; so we thought to slip away early in the morning, and made our arrangements the last thing at night, after leaving his hospitable roof.

But the Law of Gweedore knew all that happened in Gweedore. A full hour before we had appointed for being called we were called. His Reverence had arranged our conveyance, and *paid for it*—paid also, I think, for a luncheon-basket. Willy-nilly, we went round by Bloody Foreland and visited the evicted tenants, crouching under scraws and twigs, in shelters which suggested the caves of the earth-dwellers rather than anything fit for man.

Gortahork I remember as a place where we had a good meal of tea and hot cakes and eggs, and other things thrown in, for a shilling. And I remember also the long, long drive to Letterkenny—some forty miles it was, I seem to remember, but shall not

pledge myself to it lest I be confuted—and how we dashed along the sides of precipices, we on one side of the car, with our feet almost touching earth, the other side high in air, being weighted only with empty parcel-post hampers, of which Donegal needs no great supply; below us—far, far below—a valley filled in with mighty stones and rocks. The pace was so fast that we could hardly keep our seats, though well accustomed to that car which the unlettered English tripper is apt to call "a jolting car"; and the driver was quite unaware of our discomfort, assuring us with as much jocularity as a Donegal man permits himself that the horses never were known to stumble, and that, although an occasional English tourist did fall off, he or she always "fell soft."

After all, when I look back to that scamper through Donegal many years ago, I remember the mountains and the priests. Monuments of a beautiful hospitality, the priests for me mark the wild ways up and down Donegal.

CHAPTER X

IRISH TRAITS AND WAYS

An English person in Ireland may find himself astray because he will have no clue to the minds of the people. I once heard two English ladies returning from an Irish trip say to each other across a railway-carriage, otherwise full of Irish people, that the Irish all told lies. This was a rash judgment and a harsh one ; I do not know what the occasion of it was. Sometimes the Irish, through their naturally gracious manners, will say the thing that will please you best to hear rather than the absolute truth by rule of thumb. There is the well-known, well-founded complaint about Irish distances ; a peasant will tell you that you are three miles from a place when you are really seven. Now, of course you may be misled by the difference between the Irish and English mile ; and thereby hangs a tale. The Irish or Plantation measure was adopted by Cromwell's planted English, so that they might get a bigger slice of land than was intended for them. But if you are told you have three Irish miles to go and find

that you have seven, almost certainly the thought uppermost in your misinformant's mind was : " The crathur ! Sure, he'll think nothin' of it if he believes it's only three miles ; and the spring 'ud be taken out of him altogether if he thought he'd seven weary miles before him yet. And, sure, by the time he's travelled the three miles he won't be far off the seven."

The Irish mind, besides being very nimble, is subtle and complicated. It may have gone off on an excursion before answering you which you in your Anglo-Saxon plainness would never dream of ; and your truth may not be the Irish truth at all, and yet both of them be the genuine article.

A very small Irish boy of my acquaintance, being rudely accused of having told a lie, responded meekly : " I don't think it were really a lie ; I think it were only an imagination."

" Are there any priests in the town ?" you ask an Irishman ; and he replies, there being some half-dozen : " The streets are black with them."

" You can't always depend on eggs, not if they comes in fresh from the nest," said an Irish servant to me, when some of the grocer's " new-laid " eggs had " popped " in the saucepan. The remark was

purely consolatory and was not at all intended to convey that the hens laid stale eggs.

The Irish "bull," so-called, very often is the result of the nimble-wittedness of the speaker. He has thought more than he has expressed, and the bull implies a hiatus. "I'd better be a coward for ten minutes than be dead all my life" is a famous example of an Irish bull; but it only means "all the days of my natural life"; so much was not expressed.

My harsh critics of the London and North-Western express would doubtless have found the soft, flattering ways of the Irish false and hypocritical. One remembers the famous compliment, "No matter what age you are, ma'am, you don't look it," and the historical compliment of the Irish coal-porter to one of the beautiful Gunnings: "Sure, I could light my pipe by the fire of her eye."

Sometimes a compliment or a wheedling good wish will take a sudden turn. "May the blessin' of God go afther you!" says an Irish beggar—"may the blessin' of God go afther you!" The desired alms not being forthcoming, the blessing flows naturally into—"and never overtake you."

The beggars are great wits, of a sardonic kind usually. A rather short friend of mine walking with

his tall sister, the two were importuned fruitlessly by a beggar-woman. Before they passed out of hearing she called gently to the lady : " Well, there you go ! And goodness help the poor little crathur that hadn't the spirit to say no to you." This double insult to the supposed husband and wife was very neat.

A matter-of-fact young sister of mine, having been begged from by a ragged woman with a string of ragged children at one end of the village, was importuned at the other end by a man, similarly accompanied, whom she took rightly to be the woman's mate. " We're poor orphans," whined the second string of children ; " our poor mother's dead and buried." " I don't believe it," she said ; " I met your mother at the other end of the village." " Take no notice of her, childer," said the man sorrowfully. " It wouldn't be right to touch a penny of her money. She's an unbeliever—that's what she is."

An old beggar-man, to whom I explained apologetically that I was without my purse, looked at me benevolently. " Never mind !" he said ; " you'd give it if you had it, wouldn't you ? But there's one thing I want to tell you : your dog's gone home without you." I don't quite know how it was meant,

but it conveyed to me a sense of well-meaning failure and inefficiency generally.

The salutations in Ireland used to be delightful. I hope it may be long before they are out of date. "God save you kindly," was the salutation on the roadside. "God save all here!" you said, entering a house. And if any work was in progress, you said: "God bless the work!" If they were churning in the kitchen as you entered it, with the old up-and-down dasher or "dash," as I knew it, you took a few turns with the dash lest you should carry off the butter. Butter and milk are things often charmed away. When I was a young girl, there was at Lucan, in the county Dublin, a fairy doctor, who was called in if the cows weren't milking well, or the butter didn't come to the churn, or if the beasts were ailing. A more Christian thing was to bring the live-stock to the priest to be blessed, or to bring the priests to the field to bless them, which is done every year. Even the Orangeman of the North, if he has a cow ailing, thinks it not amiss to ask for the priest's blessing. All the same, the Irish Celts, in their superstitions, have a way of rounding on their good friends, the priests. Priests' marriages—that is, marriages arranged by the priests—are proverbially unlucky. And to buy the priest's cow in a fair is

notoriously unlucky for the general dealing of the day, as well as that particular one.

The freedom of the people with their superiors is often a stumbling-block to the stranger; while to the Irish man or woman the division between classes in England will seem strange and unnatural—inhuman almost. "That's an elegant new trousers you have on, Master John," I heard an apple-woman by the kerb say to a young gentleman. The intimacy is not at all presumptuous; very far from it. Indeed, Irish people coming to live in England often blunder into treating their inferiors with the easy intimacy of the life at home, only to find that it is neither desired nor expected.

Irish servants of the old class were retainers and very much devoted to the families they lived with. The conditions were strange and difficult to those not accustomed to them. You would find a family of the gentry of the lowest Low Church on terms of tender affection with its Papistical servants and with the neighbouring peasants. They would have told you as abstract facts that Home Rule would mean the massacre of the Protestants, and that already their lands and properties were partitioned in the secret councils of whatever League happened to be uppermost at the moment. It would be an article of their

creed that the priests were accountable for all the troubles of Ireland. They would have consented generally to the axiom that no Irish Papist told the truth. Yet they would always exempt their own servants, and perhaps their own tenants, and would fly at you as being anti-Irish if you suggested a flaw in the Irish character, or even an excellency in the English, which is almost as bad, if not quite. There are families of Irish gentlefolk come down in the world whose servants, having feasted with them, starve with them. One such servant I knew who managed the whole finances of the family, and laid out the few coins to the greatest advantage, allotting the supplies with a carefulness which must have been bitter to her Irish heart. If the family lived too well at the beginning of the week, it must go hungry at the end.

In an Irish house the young ladies and gentlemen were very often found in the kitchen, not in pursuit of the housewifely virtues, but for social reasons. The kitchen-fire was the best "to have a heat by." The cook would rake out the ashes and make the fire bright for Master Rody or Miss Sheila to warm their feet by; and in the kitchen Irish children of the gentle class got filled to the lips with the peculiarly awful ghost-stories of the Celt, with old songs and charms

and folklore of one sort or another; sometimes, too, with old legends and stories which make young rebels of the children of the garrison and perhaps old rebels as well. There is no nurse so warm and comfortable as a good Irish nurse, as the little children of the Irish nobility and gentry — invading or planted families, very often — found, drawing life from an Irish breast, and wrapped up in a comfortable Irish embrace from all ghosts and hobgoblins.

I remember the young daughter of very Evangelical gentlepeople in Ireland who used to spend her Sunday afternoons, with the full knowledge of her parents, seated on the kitchen-table reading Papistical newspapers to the servants, whom she adored, and who adored her with at least an equal warmth. Her gold watch was the gift of one old servant; and on the eve of her marriage to a London curate she found pinned to her pincushion an envelope containing a five-pound note—"For my darling Miss Biddy, from Mary Anne."

It has always seemed to me that the tie was closer and tenderer between the Irish Catholic servant and the Protestant gentry than when the employers are also of the old religion. It is certain that in the burning of Scullabogue Barn, and at

the Bridge of Wexford, during the Rebellion, Catholic servants perished with their Protestant employers.

The tender concern that may be shown for you by an Irish person of whom you ask the way will stir you to wonderment. "Is it permissible to walk on the sea-wall?" a friend of mine asked of an Irish policeman. "Sure it is; but I wouldn't do it if I was you. It 'ud be terrible cowld," was the reply. "I wouldn't walk it if I was you," you may be answered when you ask how far a place is; "you wouldn't be killin' yourself—now, would you?"

When ladies first rode the bicycle in Ireland they excited different emotions, according to the character of the looker-on. "What would the blessed saints in heaven think of you?" the old women used to call out; but one old man had only compassion for the female cyclist. "God help yez," he said; "'tis killin' yourselves yez'll be with them little wheely things, bad luck to them!"

You will find the soft, insinuating ways in a shop when you make a purchase or mean to make one. "It looks lovely on you," a shop-assistant will say, with an air of being dispassionate. "Can you send this home to-night?" you ask, having concluded your purchase. "Sure, why not?" If you are

English-born and bred, you will be at a loss to say why not.

A policeman in Dublin will direct you: "You take that turn over there, an' you go along till you meet a turn on your left, but you'll take no notice of that; you'll keep straight on, and there'll be another turn, but you'll take no notice of that. An' after that, you'll come to a third turn, an' you'll take notice of that, for that's the street you're after."

I recognized a countryman of my own in London when I asked a policeman the way and demurred from his instructions, remarking that I had been told to approach by a different way. "Sure you can, if you like," he said, looking at me with his head on one side, "but I wouldn't if I was you; it 'ud be a terrible long way round."

An Irishman will always agree with you if he can —or even if he can't. It is the Irish politeness. If you were to say to him, "Three years ago to-day I had as bad a cold as ever I had in my life," he will say, "To be sure you had; I remember it well. 'Twas a terrible dose of a cowld, all out." This makes the Irish a very agreeable people to live with if you have not offended them.

There are one or two virtues, not of the shining

sort, which are hardly virtues at all, but rather vices to the Irish. Thrift is one of these. Another is its cousin, punctuality. No Irishman holds punctuality in honour. Irish time used to be twenty-five minutes later than English time, and took a deal longer than that to come up with English time. Any time at all will do for an Irishman. "Punctuality is the thief of time" is one of his axioms. Above all things, he despises punctuality about meal-times, and this, I know, will wring an Englishman's withers. An Irish meal is served whenever it is ready; and if it is never ready at all, the Irishman will take a snack when he feels he really wants it. No Irishman is ill-tempered because his meals are late. He prides himself on his indifference to food as one of the things that set him apart from the unspiritual Saxon. You could hardly offend an Irishman more than by accusing him of having a hearty appetite. His meals are all movable feasts. Oddly enough, the Anglo-Irishman is quite as unpunctual as the Celt, if not more so. He assimilates the ways of the Celt, while the Celt remains untouched by his. The Anglo-Irishman is often as good a trencherman as his English brother, but he would never think of disturbing the machinery of Irish life so far as to expect his dinner at a given time. I have been asked to dine in

Dublin and have arrived punctually, only to find the tradesmen's carts delivering the dinner; and, having grown accustomed to English ways, I have made a frantic effort to arrive at the appointed hour for a luncheon-party, only to find the hostess lying down with toothache, and the drawing-room fire still unlit.

To be sure, you may arrive at a house at any hour of the day in Ireland and fall in for a meal. If you arrive at a time within at all measurable distance of meal-time, you shall not go forth unfed, although you be press-ganged to stay. I shall never forget the horror of my Irish friends when they heard that one was allowed to leave an English house with the dinner-bell in one's ears. "It must be an *awful* country," they said; then, detecting something of guilt, perhaps, in my air, they ventured: "But that wouldn't happen in an *Irish* house—not in *yours*." When I confessed that it had happened in mine they changed the subject. If they had allowed themselves to speak, they would have said too much.

I know an Irishman settled in England—a North of Ireland, that is to say a Scotch-Irishman, and a man of business—who always has the motor round for a spin as soon as the

dinner-bell rings. He cannot keep his English servants, and is grieved at their perversity, which would keep him chained to a hot dining-room on an ideal evening for a motor-run. His guests stay their hunger with sherry and biscuits while they await his return.

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